

## CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

## INFORMATION REPORT

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## General Information

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Seliger occupied an area of 260 sq. km and was about 90 km long. Approximately 700 people lived on Gorodomlya Island. This number included Germans and Soviets who were employed at Branch No. 1 and their families.

2. Gorodomlya Island was irregular in form and had several finger-like peninsulas. The central part, on which Branch No. 1 and the employees' homes were situated, was about three kilometers long and two kilometers wide. An artificial lake had been dug out of a swamp section of the inhabited section of the island. A larger island near Gorodomlya was uninhabited, as were all other islands in Lake Seliger.
3. Communication with nearby Ostashkov on the mainland was by small boat. There were two railroad lines from Ostashkov -- the Leningrad-Moscow and the Brest Litovsk, which led through what I believe was Rzhev. The fare to Leningrad or Moscow was 60 rubles.
4. Since the inhabitants of Gorodomlya had been selectively recruited for work at Branch No. 1 on the basis of their technical training, the population did not constitute a typical Soviet community. My impressions of health conditions in the Soviet Union might be different had I lived in a less artificial assemblage, or had I had an opportunity to observe Ostashkov in detail. Ostashkov, with a population of approximately 16,000 inhabitants, was probably a typical Soviet city of minor industrial importance.

#### Disease Incidence

5. The only serious disease epidemic on Gorodomlya Island was the outbreak of malaria which occurred in 1947 and continued until 1948. Soviet physicians conducted blood smear tests to detect the presence of the disease and administered akrikhin tablets to the many victims. Every house was liberally sprayed with a powder of composition unknown to me. To my knowledge no injections were employed in the malaria treatment. Quinine, which I believe was unavailable on the island, was not used either. Malaria cases no longer appeared after 1948 except for infrequent recurrences in recidive form.
6. I heard of no typhoid, dysentery, or venereal disease cases. Several paratyphoid cases were reported on the island and I heard that typhoid was prevalent in Ostashkov, probably because of the absence of sewage disposal and public water supply systems there. There was one case of hepatitis epidemica; there was no incidence of typhus.
7. Worm parasites plagued everyone on the island. Infestation was the common fate of all inhabitants, Germans and Soviets alike.

#### Medical Facilities and Care

8. Medical care for the island inhabitants was supplied at a polyclinic located in a one-story wooden house. The staff consisted of two female physicians, Kiselova, 55 years old, and Vasilovka, 35, who were wives of engineers employed at

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Branch No. 1, five or six nurses, and one dentist, who I believe was a dental technician. The polyclinic consisted of one reception room, 25 ft. x 25 ft., two smaller examination rooms for the use of the doctors, a similar room for X-ray examination and sun lamp treatment, and four or five rooms with beds in which patients with minor ailments were hospitalized. I do not believe that the polyclinic had more than 10 beds in all.

9. The physicians at the island polyclinic treated only routine ailments and referred all other cases to Ostashkov, Kalinin, or Moscow. Vasileva performed the greater share of the medical treatment at the Gorodomlya polyclinic. Kiselova administered all immunizations and attended to other public health affairs, e.g., maintenance of statistics and hygiene propaganda. I considered neither of these women very capable. Although they were professionally trained, i.e., not merely technicians, they both were addressed as "tovarishch", never as "doctor". I do not know how much professional training the nurses had completed but I thought they were quite competent.
10. All children on Gorodomlya were immunized against smallpox, diphtheria, and, I believe, tuberculosis, before they were one year old. I know of no other immunizations given children and do not recall the Soviets using pertussis vaccination.
11. All German and Soviet adults were given typhoid shots annually. These were administered to the men at the Branch No. 1 building and to the women at the island polyclinic. I do not know what constituted the typhoid shot; it was colorless and may have contained more than one vaccine. I assume that all vaccines came from Kalinin or Moscow.
12. I know of no medical research carried on in Ostashkov or on Gorodomlya Island. It is possible that the Soviets may have used their statistics on the 1947-48 malaria epidemic for a report but I do not know. To my knowledge the Soviets showed no interest in the use of the island in Lake Seliger or in the surrounding area for medical investigations. I believe that in general the Soviet authorities paid very little attention to the needs of the Ostashkov inhabitants because that city was of very minor importance to the Soviet economy.
13. Kiselova's efforts to disseminate hygiene propaganda were rather limited. She displayed placards at the polyclinic, but lectures or films were never scheduled on a regular basis. I recall there having been only one health lecture given during my stay on the island; the lecture was open only to Soviet women and concerned a medical subject not otherwise identified to me. Kiselova also taught at a kindergarten, which consumed time which she might otherwise have devoted to medical work.
14. As previously mentioned, patients at Gorodomlya having ailments of a nature other than routine were referred elsewhere for treatment. In the winter of 1946 I developed a salivary calculus which was extremely painful. I was referred to a polyclinic in Podlipki for medical treatment. I believe that the Gorodomlya physicians had done some work there or knew

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someone on the staff of the Podlipki polyclinic and therefore recommended that I go there for assistance. Another reason for my referral to Podlipki may have been that the main institute of which the Gorodomlya organization was a branch was located there.

15. The Podlipki polyclinic was a general clinic with nothing to recommend it. It had only a minimum of equipment, including an ancient X-ray apparatus. At this polyclinic I was given no treatment other than having an X-ray photograph taken of the calculus. From Podlipki I was referred to a stomatology clinic somewhere in the center of Moscow. This clinic was very modern and appeared well equipped. It occupied a four-story stone building, approximately 150 m. x 150 m. I cannot furnish any details concerning the Moscow clinic except to say that I observed a long row of dentist chairs in one room, unseparated by partitions, with apparently modern equipment. A specialist at this stomatology clinic made several tests, e.g., blood analysis, blood pressure measurement, and blood sedimentation tests. Fortunately the calculus, two smooth stones, were passed spontaneously by my salivary gland without the need for an operation. (I had a similar salivary calculus in Germany during the war which had been removed surgically.) The Soviet physician did not request that an analysis be made of the calculus.
16. I know nothing about the use of blood banks in the USSR, nor have I heard anything to indicate that the Soviets have a blood substitute. I never heard of Periston or Macrodex, not even in the Soviet Zone of Germany.
17. I saw no veterinarians but, since a veterinary pharmacy was located in Ostashkov, I assume that the area had such service.

#### Food Availability and Inspection

18. The supply of food on Gorodomlya Island, while generally of good quality, seemed to be inadequate to meet the demand. Flour was always scarce. Frequently the diet was one-sided; for example, only one type of vegetable, such as cabbage, would be available for some time. I do not know how such diets affected the health of the general public, but I observed that Soviet 12- and 13-year-olds were pathetically thin. However, since they developed into healthy, robust adults within two or three years, I concluded that their apparent undernourishment was merely a stage of their development.
19. Meat was never available on the island and had to be purchased in the Ostashkov market place. The meat sold there was state-controlled and bore an inspection stamp; private sale of it was not permitted. I do not know who the food inspectors were. I believe the meat came from the surrounding area.
20. Milk was sold from large, open pails on Gorodomlya and dispensed to purchasers who furnished the containers. Although the milk was unpasteurized, its quality, taste, and consistency seemed to be very good and I knew of no cases of tuberculosis which resulted from consuming it. I do not know whether the quality of the milk was controlled but I saw no evidence of a State control of milk purity. Fresh cream, sour cream, and cottage cheese were also obtained from local sources. Other cheeses were also available but I do not believe that these were local products. A heated milk, moloko toplenoye, was a very popular and flavorful drink and was sold in small crocks or flasks.

#### Water Supply

21. Drinking water was piped to all residences on Gorodomlya Island. I do not know whether the Soviet authorities maintained a sanitary check on this water. There were two sources of water, the artificial pond and a deep well. I do not know how deep this well was sunk; water obtained from it was usually drunk without further treatment. The well supply occasionally was inadequate and water from the pond was then used, after it had been filtered in some way by Soviet engineers. This filtered water was then potable. However, the Soviets on the island regularly drank water directly from the pond and I never heard of any ill effect which resulted.

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22. There was no public water supply in Ostashkov. The water used was gotten from Lake Seliger in buckets and I do not believe it was treated in any way. There may also have been some wells in Ostashkov but I am not certain of this. There was undoubtedly no check on the purity of the water drunk by the Ostashkov population.

#### Disposal Facilities

23. A sewage disposal system existed on Gorodomlya Island. The sewage pipes led to a swamp on the island where a settling basin was located and where the wastes were chlorinated. I know no details of this system. Ostashkov had no sanitary sewage system whatsoever. I do not know how the sewage was removed.

#### Pest Control

24. Although the island was infested with mosquitoes, I knew of no official control of these pests other than that employed during the antimalaria campaign in 1948. Flies were never a problem. There were very few rats on Gorodomlya, perhaps because most of the families, particularly the Germans, had cats as pets. These cats had been obtained from the island or Ostashkov.

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